

Message Text

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67

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 PC-04 OMB-01 NIC-01 CU-04

CIAE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

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R 221844 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4713

INFO DIA WASHDC

CINCSO

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINS, UY

SUBJECT: STUDENT VIOLENCE RETURNS

CINCSO FOR POLAD

REF: A) MONTEVIDEO 1833 B) MONTEVIDEO 30

1. AFTER THREE MONTHS OF RELATIVE CALM, MONTEVIDEO SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN STRUCK BY VIOLENT CLASHES BETWEEN LEFT AND RIGHT- WING STUDENT GROUPS. THE MOST SERIOUS LEFT TWO WOUNDED AND OVER 200 ARRESTED ON JUNE 20. EARLIER IN THE MONTH, SEVEN SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAD BEEN TEMPORARILY CLOSED DURING ONE FORTY-EIGHT HOUR PERIOD AS A RESULT OF STUDENT VIOLENCE OR UN-AUTHORIZED STUDENT ASSEMBLIES.

2. LED BY THE COMMUNISTS, THE LEFT BLAMES THE CLASHES ON RIGHT-IST YOUTH GROUPS LIKE THE MOVIMIENTO DE RESTAURACION NACIONAL (MRN) , THE JUVENTUD URUGUAYA DE PIE (UPLN AND THE NEWLY EMERGED BRIGADAS ANTI- COMUNISTAS 73 (BAC 73). THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL (CONAE), WHICH ADMINISTERS THE SECONDARY, PRIMARY AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS, INDIRECTLY CONFIRMED THE LEFTIST CHARGES IN A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED IN REACTION TO THE VIOLENCE.

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CONAE ATTACKED " THE PRETENCE THAT SOME STRONG- ARM GROUPS CONSTITUTE SEMI- OFFICIAL ARMED INSTRUMENTS OF THE LAW...". THE FIRST SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, RODNEY ARISMENDI, CHARGED ON JUNE 7 THAT THE POLICE ARE PROTECTING THE RIGHTISTS BANDS, AND THE EXECUTIVE HAS INITIATED LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST HIM AS A RESULT. (REFTEL A).

3. EDUCATION MINISTER ROBAINA HAS CONDEMNED EXTREME LEFT AND RIGHT- WING PRESS FOR FOMENTING CONFRONTATION ATMOSPHERE IN SCHOOLS AND FOR EXAGGERATING EXTENT OF STUDENT CLASHES. ROBAINA AND CONAE DIRECTORS HAVE ALSO WARNED THAT ANY STUDENT FOUND RESPONSIBLE FOR CLASHES WILL BE SUSPENDED, BUT ROBAINA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SCHOOL AUTHORITIES ARE FINDING IT " ENORMOUSLY DIFFICULT" TO FIX RESPONSIBILITY.

4. COMMENT: CONAE, WHICH WAS CREATED LAST JANUARY IN A MAJOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM (REFTEL B) IS NOW FACING ITS FIRST REAL TEST. ACTUAL NUMBER OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE IS STILL SMALL, BUT IT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO GENERAL SENSE OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MALAISE OF NATION. THE OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE MAY BE THE RESULT OF FRUSTRATION ON THE RIGHT WITH THE SLOW PACE OF REFORM. THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES WHICH CONAE HAS INSTITUTED HAVE BEEN THE REPLACEMENT OF 13 SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND INSPECTORS AT THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR IN MARCH AND AN INCREASED EFFORT TO ENFORCE DISCIPLINE, PARTICULARLY THE PROHIBITION AGAINST STUDENT ASSEMBLIES. THE RIGHT HAS CHARGED THAT CONAE IS WEAK AND INEFFECTIVE IN ENDING LEFTIST DOMINATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND HAS EMPLOYED ONLY HALF- MEASURES, IF THAT.
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